SMALL EMPLOYER
CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION PROGRAM
(SECORP)

Overview

The SECORP provides an opportunity for "small employers" to build a health and safety management system and achieve a Certificate of Recognition (COR). The program is specifically designed to meet the application and training needs of "small employers" while considering their resource limitations.

Alberta Human Resources and Employment, Workplace Health and Safety and its Certifying Partners have reviewed and updated the SECORP. This information introduces the new SECORP.

The Primary Steps for Achieving a COR for "Small Employers"

1. **Contact a Certifying Partner.**
2. **Take the training necessary for developing and auditing a health and safety management system.**
3. **Develop and implement a health and safety management system.**
4. **Complete an audit and submit it to a Certifying Partner for review.**

Am I a "Small Employer?"

A **"Small Employer"** has 10 or fewer employees. This number includes the owner, clerical or administration staff, part time workers, temporary staff, family members, volunteers, sub-contractors, piece workers, etc. Anyone who carries out activities that directly effect the outcome of the employer's work is an employee.

Material suppliers, inspectors, equipment rental deliverers, etc. that supply a service to the small employer are not included in the 10 or less figure. They may be subject to some of the small employer's basic workplace health and safety rules that apply to the site such as personal protective equipment requirements.

What is a Certificate of Recognition for "Small Employers?"

The COR is issued to an employer whose audited health and safety management system meets or exceeds the standards that have been developed for the SECORP. A well functioning system can demonstrate due diligence by the employer and result in reduced injuries, illnesses and related costs.

Employers who achieve a COR and are registered in the Partners in Injury Reduction (PIR) program administered by the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) are eligible to receive a minimum 5% reduction in their WCB premium assessment.

Additionally, employers who have achieved a COR are becoming the contractors of choice for key principal contractors within the province.

The COR is valid for three years as long as the employer meets the definition of a small employer and the COR is maintained according to minimum standards and requirements.

Before entering into the SECORP the employer must evaluate where they might be in the future as it relates to the number of employees. If the number of employees exceeds 10, the employer must move to the next level of program within their industry.

For more information on the SECORP, contact a Certifying Partner (*see Appendix B*).

Program Objectives

Initially, ***Partnerships*** offered all employers a single process for achieving a Certificate of Recognition (COR). However, it soon became apparent that the "regular COR" process needed to be modified to accommodate employers with informal organizational and administrative structures, basic supervisory responsibilities and limited resources. These employers tend to be owner-operators (one-person operations) or have few owner-supervised employees.

Data from October 2000 indicates that of the 110,000 employers in Alberta, around 90,000 are owner-operators or have 10 or fewer employees. The SECORP was developed to accommodate this significant group of employers.

Definition of a small employer under the SECORP	**An employer having 10 or fewer employees inclusive of anyone whom directly affects the outcome of the employer's work (e.g., owner, administration, part time, temporary and sub-contractors).**

The objectives of the SECORP are:

- Increase Workplace Health and Safety awareness among employers and workers.
- Control injury and illness through the development of effective Workplace Health and Safety Management Systems.
- Provide an opportunity for small employers to obtain a COR.

The principle features of the SECORP that benefit small employers are:

- *A Partnerships Small Employer Audit Standard that acknowledges a basic or informal organizational and administrative structure* - This audit standard is used to guide the development of audit instruments tailored to small operations.
- *A short training program for employers* - Most training programs are one to two days thereby minimizing the time away from operations.
- *The option for health and safety program evaluation by the trained owner or an employee* - Scheduling of the audit is under direct control of the employer and the financial burden of the evaluation is minimized.

SECORP Standards

The SECORP standards are comprised of five administrative standards and the Partnerships Small Employer Audit Standard.

The SECORP standards have been developed in consultation with small employers, prime contractors and industry associations. They are used by Certifying Partners to guide the development of a SECORP specific to the industries they service. These standards are ***effective January 1, 2002***.

Administrative Standards

Training Standard

- Course is equivalent to a one-day minimum.
- Owner, most senior operational person or employee that is familiar with the overall work operation must take training.
- Persons taking the initial training would take a one-day refresher course every three years.
- Instructors are competent in delivering courses to adult learners.
- Instructor performance is evaluated at least annually.
- Course content is accurate, current and relevant to the needs of the learner.
- Course pre-requisite or equivalency requirements are appropriate.
- Course measures candidates' achievement of the learning objectives.
- Records are kept of candidates' participation and successful course completion.

Audit Standard

- Employers submit audits and supporting documentation to appropriate Certifying Partner for review and evaluation.
- Employers develop and submit an action plan to the Certifying Partner for each question that is answered "No" in the audit.
- All audits submitted to a Certifying Partner for a COR or COR renewal must be validated by a Commissioner for Oaths.
- A person who meets the training standards must complete the audit.
- The audit pass mark is 80% overall with at least 50% in each element.
- The audit instrument is to meet or exceed the Partnerships Small Employer Audit Standard.

Maintenance Standard

- To maintain a COR in good standing, an audit with supporting documentation and any required action plan must be submitted annually to a Certifying Partner. (*Note: a Commissioner for Oaths validation is not required in COR maintenance years.*)

Quality Assurance Standard

- Certifying Partner will review and evaluate audits (with supporting documentation and action plans) submitted by small employers requesting a COR.
- Certifying Partner ensures audits submitted for a COR or COR renewal are validated by a Commissioner for Oaths.
- Certifying Partner will review and evaluate all audits submitted for COR maintenance.
- Certifying Partner will retain audits for a period of three years.

Review Standard

- Alberta Human Resources and Employment, Workplace Health and Safety and the Certifying Partners will facilitate a review of SECORP at least every three years.

***Partnerships* Small Employer Audit Standard**

The "***Partnerships*** Small Employer Audit Standard" (the Standard) is derived from the "***Partnerships*** Audit Standard" used in the regular Certificate of Recognition Program.

The purpose of this Standard is to provide guidance in developing audit instruments. It identifies the content and components of key elements that should be included in an audit instrument.

All audit instruments must meet the Standard by January 1, 2002 to be approved for use in Partnerships.

This Standard applies to all small employers including ***owner-operators****. In cases where the employer is an owner-operator, portions of the Standard may not be applicable. These situations are qualified in the Standard and identified as* ***"If applicable."***

Responses to questions within the small employer audit instrument must be supported by documentation provided by the auditor. The auditor may need to make work site observations and interview employees in order to come to conclusions before submitting supporting documentation.

Element 1 - Owner Commitment and Program Administration	
Content	**Components**
For any health and safety management system to be effective, owners must demonstrate commitment and administer the program. Keeping records plays a critical part in monitoring the effectiveness of a health and safety management system. Program communication must ensure employees understand the program. Audits need to measure the level of owner commitment and employee involvement (if applicable).	• A health and safety policy signed and dated by the owner. • Awareness of the owner, and employees (if applicable) of their role and responsibility as defined by the policy. • Knowledge and awareness of relevant legislation. • Two-way communication (e.g., health and safety meetings) (if applicable). • Records management. • Owner ensures policies and hazard control methods are followed.

Element 2 - Hazard Identification, Assessment and Control	
Content	**Components**
All equipment, machinery, work areas and work processes need to be carefully evaluated to identify all hazards and assess their risk. Control measures need to be in place to eliminate or reduce the risk of harm to the owner, employees (if applicable) and equipment. Audits need to measure the systems in place for identifying, assessing and controlling job specific health and safety hazards.	• Current analysis and assessment of jobs and operations for hazards. • Planned (preventive) maintenance programs for equipment and machinery. • Written safe work practices and procedures for hazardous jobs and operations. • Availability, training and maintenance of accepted personal protective equipment for the industry.

Element 3 - Inspections	
Content	**Components**
A health and safety management system must include work site inspections that will make looking for hazards a normal part of work. Audits need to measure inspection activities.	• The owner or designate conducting inspections on a regular basis. • A checklist or other format for conducting inspections and a follow-up action plan for correcting deficiencies. • A means for employees (if applicable) to report existing or new hazards.

Element 4 - Training, Emergency Response and Accident/Incident Investigation	
Content	**Components**
Owners and employees (if applicable) need training to ensure they can do their jobs safely and respond to emergency situations. Measures must be put in place to investigate and identify causes of accidents/incidents to prevent reoccurrence. Audits need to measure whether owners and employees (if applicable) are trained to perform their assigned tasks and can respond to emergencies appropriately. Audits must also determine if there is a system for the reporting and investigating of accidents/incidents.	• New employee (if applicable) orientation that occurs on the first day of employment and includes critical issues such as: – health and safety policies and responsibilities, – hazard reporting, – emergency procedures, – injury/accident/near-miss reporting. • Current job and industry specific training that covers: – specific industry hazards (e.g., H2S, Confined Space Entry), – hazards and their control methods (e.g., safe work practices and procedures), – emergency response (e.g., first aid). • Written plans addressing possible emergencies. • Employer awareness of how to respond in an emergency. • Emergency response drills. • Reporting of workplace injuries, illnesses and near-miss incidents. • Investigation of injuries, illnesses, near-miss incidents and corrective measures taken.

Element 5 - Contracting Services	
Content	**Components**
The Contracting Services element only applies to those small employers who contract with another employer to provide a service. Audits need to measure how the small employer fits into the contracting organization's health and safety program.	• Awareness of the hazards and control measures at a particular contracted work site. • The results of the meeting and plan developed between the small employer and the contracting organization's representative. • Effective communication of those hazards and control measures to the employees (if applicable).

Element 6 - Action Plan	
Content	**Components**
An action plan is the owner's commitment to the employees and the Partnerships Program for continuous improvement in the health and safety management system. Audits need to measure whether an effective action plan is in place to improve the health and safety management system.	• The development of the action plan for items answered "No" in the audit. • Person (if other than owner-operator) responsible for undertaking improvements. • A timetable for completion of items. • Evidence of action plan implementation.

Partnerships IN HEALTH AND SAFETY

PARTNERSHIPS SMALL EMPLOYER AUDIT INSTRUMENT

**** This sample audit instrument is for your information only ****

An auditor must be trained in the use of this or any other audit instrument before a Certifying Partner will accept it for review. Please contact your Certifying Partner or Workplace Health and Safety for further information.

This audit instrument is designed to determine whether the small employer has addressed basic aspects of a health and safety management system. It must be conducted by the owner, most senior operational person or employee that is familiar with the overall work operation and who has received the appropriate training.

A pass mark is 80% or greater overall (at least 25 "Yes" out of 28 questions) and 50% or greater (at least 2 "Yes" when there are 3 questions) in each applicable element.

Completion Instructions

1. Read each question and verify whether the answer is "Yes" or "No."
2. All questions answered "Yes" require **"SUPPORTING INFORMATION"** (i.e., documentation). Provide supporting information under **"ACTIONS"** (where convenient) or attach supporting information.
3. If the question is answered "No" provide action plan steps for improvement (or attach an "Action Plan").
4. The auditor may need to conduct work site observations (O) and interviews (I) in order to answer some questions. These are identified in the audit instrument.
5. In cases where the owner is the auditor some validation techniques may not be relevant (e.g., interview for question 1.3).
6. Questions that have an asterisk (*) do not need to be answered by owner-operators (indicate N/A) and are not considered in the scoring for owner-operators.
7. Under the element "Contracting Services" an optional Contracting Organization Health and Safety Questionnaire (Appendix A) can be completed in lieu of supplying supporting documentation for questions 5.1 and 5.2.

Name of Employer	

1. OWNER COMMITMENT AND PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION				
QUESTIONS	Yes	No	SUPPORTING INFORMATION	ACTIONS
1.1 Is there a Workplace Health and Safety Policy signed and dated by the owner?			Attach a copy of the Policy.	
1.2 Do both owner and employees know what the Workplace Health and Safety Policy states? (I) *			Attach a complete list of company employees. Employees should be able to support your answer and may be contacted by your Certifying Partner.	
1.3 Is the owner aware of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations that are relevant to the workplace? (I)			Name the regulations relevant to the workplace.	
1.4 Are employees aware of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations that are relevant to the workplace? (I) *			Attach a complete list of company employees. Employees should be able to support your answer and may be contacted by your Certifying Partner.	
1.5 Does the owner encourage discussion and resolution of health and safety issues with everyone at the workplace? (I) *			Attach information on how this is done, such as safety meeting notes.	
1.6 Are records kept of all incidents, investigations and follow-up steps?			Attach records of the past 12 months.	
1.7 Does the owner ensure health and safety policies and hazard control methods are followed? (O)			Outline how the owner ensures that health and safety policies and hazard control methods are followed.	

* Not applicable to owner-operators

SAMPLE

2. HAZARD IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND CONTROL				
QUESTIONS	Yes	No	SUPPORTING INFORMATION	ACTIONS
2.1 Are health and safety hazards or risks, including chemicals hazards, identified? (O)			Attach a list of identified hazards or risks.	
2.2 Are steps taken to prevent the owner and employees (if applicable) from becoming ill or injured from the hazards or risks listed in 2.1? (O)			For each of the hazards or risks listed in 2.1 indicate protection measures taken.	
2.3 Is there a preventive maintenance program for equipment and machinery?			Submit a copy of maintenance logs or records of the past 12 months.	
2.4 Is appropriate personal protective equipment available and are users trained in the use, care and maintenance of the equipment? (O)			Submit a list of available personal protective equipment, training records and attach appropriate codes of practice.	

3. INSPECTIONS				
QUESTIONS	Yes	No	SUPPORTING INFORMATION	ACTIONS
3.1 Are regular inspections of the workplace carried out to identify hazards and ensure control measures are in place and working? (O)			How many inspections have the owner or designate undertaken in the past 12 months?	
3.2 Is there an inspection checklist or other format with a plan to correct unsafe conditions and acts?			Attach the three most recent inspection reports showing what was looked for, found and corrective action taken.	
3.3 Do employees have a means to report existing and new hazards? (I) *			Provide examples of how employees report hazards. (e.g. toolbox meeting notes, letters, memos).	

* Not applicable to owner-operators

SAMPLE

4. TRAINING, EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND ACCIDENT/INCIDENT INVESTIGATION				
QUESTIONS	Yes	No	SUPPORTING INFORMATION	ACTIONS
4.1 Is health and safety orientation provided to all new employees on their first day of employment? *			Attach a list of orientation topics covered and include copies of the last three orientations, including sign-off to indicate employee participation.	
4.2 Has job safety and safety training been taken that covers hazards (e.g., H2S, confined space entry) and control methods (e.g., safe work practices and procedures)?			Attach a copy of job health and safety training records.	
4.3 Is there an Emergency Response Plan including training in first aid?			Attach a copy of your plan for emergencies (e.g., flood, fire) and record of first aid training.	
4.4 Are employees aware of their responsibilities in the case of an emergency? (I) *			Attach a complete list of company employees. Employees should be able to support your answer and may be contacted by your Certifying Partner.	
4.5 Are emergency drills held in the workplace? (O) *			Give date/details of a recent drill.	
4.6 Are workplace injuries, illnesses and near-miss incidents reported both internally and externally (e.g., WHS, WCB)?			Describe how incidents are reported.	
4.7 Are investigations conducted into workplace injuries, illnesses and near-miss incidents and are corrective actions taken?			Attach a recent report to show how incidents were investigated and what corrective actions were taken.	

* Not applicable to owner-operators

SAMPLE

5. CONTRACTING SERVICES				
QUESTIONS	**Yes**	**No**	**SUPPORTING INFORMATION**	**ACTIONS**
5.1 Are workplace health and safety hazards or possible risks, including chemical hazards, identified at contracted worksites? (O)			Describe one meeting with a contracting organization representative where health and safety hazards and controls have been discussed, OR complete and submit a Contracting Organization Health & Safety Questionnaire (Appendix A).	
5.2 Has a plan been developed in consultation with the contracting organization for ensuring workplace health and safety?			Attach a plan from a contracted worksite, OR complete and submit a Contracting Organization Health & Safety Questionnaire (Appendix A).	
5.3 Are employees made aware of the hazards and control measures at a contracted worksite? (I) *			Describe how employees are made aware of hazards and control measures at contracted worksites.	

6. ACTION PLAN				
QUESTIONS	**Yes**	**No**	**SUPPORTING INFORMATION**	**ACTIONS**
6.1 Has an "Action Plan" been developed to address items answered "No" in this audit?			Attach a copy of the "Action Plan," showing steps for improvement over the next year.	
6.2 Has the owner designated a person responsible for ensuring that improvements are undertaken? (I) *			Name that person and the position held in the company.	
6.3 Have clear and timely target dates for completion of items in the "Action Plan" been set?			Provide a schedule for completion of items in the "Action Plan".	
6.4 Has the action plan from the previous audit been implemented?			Attach the action plan and describe changes that have taken place.	

* Not applicable to owner-operators

SWORN STATEMENT

The undersigned auditor, under oath, under penalty of perjury, certifies that the above information furnished in this application is true and correct.

Date	Name of Auditor	Signature of Auditor

Subscribed and sworn to before me, this _____ day of _____, 2001

Commissioner for Oaths	Expiry Date

Date	Name of Audit Reviewer	Signature of Audit Reviewer

SAMPLE

Partnerships IN HEALTH AND SAFETY

APPENDIX A

CONTRACTING ORGANIZATION HEALTH AND SAFETY QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire will determine how you fit into your contracting organization's health and safety management system. Meet with your contracting organization's contact and determine the answers to the questions. If they answer "No" to any of the questions you will have to implement systems to deal with the item. While completing this form take notes, ask for copies, ask for examples, ask how often, etc. It will help you be prepared when health and safety issues arise.

Small Employer Name			
Representative			
Telephone Number		**Fax Number**	

SAMPLE

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE CONTRACTING ORGANIZATION	**YES**	**NO**
1. Do I/we have a contact person for health and safety issues? (Name:)		
If "No" or for any variances, please explain.		
2. Will you be conducting safety inspections on the work that I do?		
2.1 Are there specific procedures for reporting hazards to you?		
2.2 Will I/we be notified when the hazards have been corrected?		
2.3 Are there specific health or safety hazards we should be aware of on your site?		
If "No" or for any variances, please explain.		

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE CONTRACTING ORGANIZATION	YES	NO
3. Are there specific job procedures that we are required to follow?		
If "No" or for any variances, please explain.		
4. Are there site specific safety rules to follow?		
4.1 Is there specific PPE required on this site?		
4.2 Do you provide any PPE?		
If "No" or for any variances, please explain.		
5. Are there specific emergency response procedures we need to follow for:		
5.1 Site evacuation (responsibilities, signals, communications)?		
5.2 Medical emergency evacuations?		
5.3 First aid for serious injuries?		
If "No" or for any variances, please explain.		
6. Do you require site health and safety orientation?		
If "No" or for any variances, please explain.		
7. Do I/we require specific health and safety training for work performed on your site (H_2S, WHMIS, confined space, etc.)?		
If "No" or for any variances, please explain.		

SAMPLE

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE CONTRACTING ORGANIZATION	YES	NO
8. Are we required to attend your safety meetings?		
If "No" or for any variances, please explain.		
9. Are there specific procedures we must follow for accident/incident reporting?		
If "No" or for any variances, please explain.		
10. Are there specific procedures we must follow for accident/incident investigations?		
If "No" or for any variances, please explain.		

SAMPLE

Contracting Organization Name			
Representative			
Telephone Number		**Fax Number**	

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Partnerships
IN HEALTH AND SAFETY

APPENDIX B

WHO ARE THE CERTIFYING PARTNERS?

A Certifying Partner is an organization that has committed to working in partnership with Alberta Human Resources and Employment, Workplace Health and Safety towards improving health and safety for Alberta workers. Certifying Partners provide training, review audits and issue CORs to employers whose audits meet quality assurance standards.

ALBERTA ASSOCIATION FOR SAFETY PARTNERSHIPS (866) 223-9008 Taber	**ALBERTA PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION OFFICE** (780) 420-4437 Edmonton
ALBERTA CONSTRUCTION SAFETY ASSOCIATION (780) 453-3311 Edmonton (800) 661-2272 Edmonton (800) 661-6090 Calgary	**ALBERTA SAFETY COUNCIL** (780) 428-7555 Edmonton (800) 301-6407
ALBERTA FOOD PROCESSORS ASSOCIATION (780) 444-2272 Edmonton	**ALBERTA SAFETY COUNCIL FOR SENIORS HOUSING** (403) 276-5541 Calgary
ALBERTA FOREST PRODUCTS ASSOCIATION (780) 452-2841 Edmonton	**MANUFACTURERS' HEALTH AND SAFETY ASSOCIATION** (780) 428-1006 Edmonton (403) 279-5555 Calgary
ALBERTA HOTEL SAFETY ASSOCIATION (780) 436-6112 Edmonton	**PETROLEUM INDUSTRY TRAINING SERVICE** (403) 250-0888 Calgary (800) 667-5557
ALBERTA LONG TERM CARE ASSOCIATION (780) 435-0699 Edmonton	**TEXTILE RENTAL INSTITUTE OF ALBERTA** (780) 472-6513 Edmonton
ALBERTA MOTOR TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION (780) 448-7456 Edmonton	**WESTERN WOOD TRUSS ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA** (403) 203-0982 Calgary
ALBERTA MUNICIPAL HEALTH & SAFETY ASSOCIATION (780) 955-3701 Nisku (800) 267-9764	

To obtain the most current information, contact the
Partnerships Hot Line
at **(780) 427-8842** in Edmonton
(for toll free access in Alberta, call 310-0000)
or visit our web site at www.whs.gov.ab.ca/partners